NAQCC News

Mar 29, 2008	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #067

In this issue:

1. April Challenge.
2. March Sprint Results
3. Latest Award Winners
4. General Club News
5. Member News

1. CHALLENGE: Our April challenge is another suggested by Don VE3HUR. It's one of our popular alphabet challenges with the words being 'Fools' from the plays of Shakespeare. So get your sheets ready and start collecting letters as soon as April Fool's day starts at 0000Z. Of course be sure to check the complete challenge rules as this is only a brief synopsis of the challenge without much detail.

Continuing this month everyone who completes the challenge and reports their results according to the rules is entered into a drawing to win one of the remaining sets of the bug or paddle handle pieces donated by Gregg WB8LZG. The winner gets to select which variety of pieces he or she needs for their particular bug or paddle. Please let us know when you submit your results if you don't want to be included in the drawing for any reason whatsoever. Otherwise you will be included, and if you win and then aren't interested, we'll have to go through the effort of a second drawing.

Full Challenge info here.

2. MARCH SPRINT RESULTS: THINK ABOUT THIS! These next couple sentences are very important. If you participate in our sprints and don't send in a log, you are not doing the most you can to promote and preserve CW, and that is a prime directive of our club and its members. When you send in a log, and folks see your call listed in the results, they know how important CW is to you, and if they are a friend of yours, they may try to emulate you and become more active in CW themselves. Not only that but every log we receive makes that list of sprint scores longer and shows the world there are more and more folks these days who are getting back to CW, and enjoying it. You may not think that sending in a log is that important, but as I said at the beginning of this, think about it. Your log is important. If you only participate and don't send in a log, then I know about your love of CW from seeing your call in other folks' logs, and the ones you worked know also, but those who are exploring the internet wondering just what this CW is all about, and how popular it is don't know about you at all, nor does he see as long a list of hams in the results as possible. So please send in your log even if you

make only a few QSO's in a sprint. It is extremely simple to do so now with the autologger and the GenLog contest program. There really is no excuse not to send in a log and shout to the world that you love CW. Now I will step down off my soapbox and take care of business.

Although there were several who did not send in their logs, nevertheless we did receive a record number of logs this month, and also set two other records. We received 61 logs which showed 104 different participants, and had 882 QSO's for me to cross-check.

Speaking of cross-checking, we have been receiving very positive response to the way we are treating 'not in log' QSO's. When I cross-check the logs and Station A shows a QSO with Station B in his log that is not in Station B's log, the following happens. An email is sent to Station A explaining the situation and urging him to check with Station B to see why the QSO was not in his log. We feel this is an extremely fair way of doing things. This month there were 8 'not in log' situations. Two stations chose not to bother checking with the other station and the QSO was deleted from their log. In 3 cases, the QSO had actually been made, but unintentionally omitted from Station B's log - so the QSO remained in Station A's log and was added to Station B's log. 3 other cases have yet to be resolved as I am writing this a couple days before the log submission deadline.

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

Logs -	**61**	**42**	**61**	**3/08**
Stns in logs -	**103**	**80**	**103**	**3/08**
Hour 1 QSO's -	**432**	**231**	**441**	**8/07**
Hour 2 QSO's -	**449**	**120**	**449**	**3/08**
Total QSO's -	**881**	**351**	**881**	**3/08**
20M QSO's -	**5**	**0**	**163**	**8/07**
40M QSO's -	**581**	**115**	**581**	**3/08**
80M QSO's -	**295**	**236**	**481**	**12/07**
Autologger logs -	**52**	**33**	**52**	**3/08**

Note: We also received two late logs with a total of 26 QSO's not included in the totals above.

WINNERS:

1st SWA - KG4W
2nd SWA - n/a
1st Gain - WA8QFE
Special Award (Highest score among those using an indoor antenna except K3WWP) - N4FI
Top Non-Winner - NF8M

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because the listing of your results on our web site shows the ham radio world that you are interested in preserving CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

We had 11 stations who didn't submit a log show up from 5 to 24 times in the 61 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 11 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log.

We welcome 8 hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:

AF2Z,AG4IP,K3OXG,KC9AQD,N3COR,NP4FW,WA1AR,WA3ZBJ,

Every once in a while we like to give thanks and honor those who regularly participate in our sprints AND send in a log. Here are the top 10 in number of sprints (max 41 excluding our special sprints):

```
1   K3WWP -   41
2   KA2KGP -  34
3   W2LJ -    30
4   WY3H -    28
5t  KD2MX -   25
5t  W2SH -    25
7t  K4NVJ -   24
7t  W9CC -    24
9t  K4BAI -   22
9t  W2JEK -   22
```

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Those reports are important also.

Full sprint info here.

3. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

AB0SR - 1000MPW #0036
K3WWP - Eastern division 2007 Participation
NU7T/WY7N (tie) - Western division 2007 Participation
VE3HUR - VE/DX division 2007 Participation
VE3HUR - Free FISTS membership renewal for 2007 Participation overall top non-officer score
K3WWP - QSO-A-Day (full year 2007)
K7ZYV - WAC
KD2MX - WAS

We hope to add your call to the list of award winners soon.

Full List of all award winners here.

4. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- We welcome Norm VE3SIC to our NAQCC staff. Norm will be handling publicity for the club in Canada and DX countries as Bob VA3RKM did until he had to resign a few months ago. Norm will be working in concert with Larry W2LJ who has been doing an excellent job publicizing the NAQCC almost from its inception 3 1/2 years ago. See the officers pictures page where Norm introduces himself to you.

- - Here is the info from Ron K5DUZ on the soon to be started NAQCC 'Elmer Project':

The "Elmer Project" is primarily intended to help those aspiring Morse Code/CW addicts to either learn CW (Continuous Wave) from the very beginning, or to increase their current copying speed into the 15-25 wpm (word per minute) range, where most CW communication

takes place on the ham bands. Learning CW has much in common with learning another spoken language. The basics are learned relatively quickly and easily, but true mastery takes a great deal of effort and considerable time. The "Elmer Project" isn't intended to be THE authoritative source on learning and mastering CW. A large amount of information on the subject is available on the Internet, presented by hams with truly impressive credentials. Unfortunately, there also is some information that is counterproductive to efficiently learning CW. Sources that present information based upon the "Koch" or "Farnsworth" learning methods are MUCH to be preferred over other methods. Certainly the old, slow, grind it out method of learning CW at 5 wpm is to be avoided, in spite of its appeal to a newcomer to CW. Learning CW at 5 wpm and then gradually grinding away, one wpm by one wpm, to finally reach 15 wpm is a long and tortuous road that need not be traveled. Learning/relearning CW at 20 wpm, or thereabouts, is the equivalent to taking a "super highway" in your car. The "Koch" learning method is the method used in the "Elmer Project". Once CW is learned BY SOUND ONLY in the range of 20 wpm, the student can immediately begin to listen to most ham band CW communications! Learning to send CW, which is best left until receiving is mastered, will swiftly proceed because the new CW addict will already know what good CW sounds like. Learning the "lingo" of ham radio CW conversation, which is an abbreviated and efficient style of conversation somewhat like taking notes in "shorthand", will quickly be learned, as will the standard procedures of making contact with other stations. All of these topics will be covered in the "Elmer Project" in due time.

In this age where we take computers for granted, CW training programs are probably the best learning tools available. There are some dedicated devices available for sending CW practice to a student and even iPods and tape recorders can be used to play recorded CW sessions. These devices are best viewed as supplemental training devices and will not be considered in the "Elmer Project". Use these devices if they work for you. The most versatile learning tool is a CW training program running on a computer and there are many programs that are offered for free, as well as commercial products that are available for a price. Certainly, there is no "best" learning program. I do recommend, however, that the budding CW addict evaluate a number of the free programs prior to purchasing a commercial product. As the saying goes, "There is nothing like an informed buyer". The "Elmer Project" will be based upon one of the free training programs simply because they are available to everyone, regardless of the number of coins in their pockets. The final selection process is nearing completion and will be announced shortly. This selection will in no way be an endorsement of the selected training program over any of the other available programs. The reality is that only one can be selected and its use documented and supported. Anyone wishing to use a program with which they are already familar is encouraged to adapt presented material to their favorite program, but the "Elmer Project", due to very limited "staffing", cannot provide any support for that effort.

Our initial evaluation has shown that all of the programs, which have been looked at, are suitable for training if CW can already be copied in the 15-25 wpm range. However, some programs are not as adept as others when learning CW from the very beginning using the "Koch" learning method, which is our preferred method.

Until next time.... HPE BCNU SN ON CW OM ES 73 FRM K5DUZ! (With apologies to the YLs and XYLs!)

- - We soon will have Ron's 'Elmer Project' as a separate section on the web site combined with the CW tips section we have now. Also we hope to have a regular section here in the newsletter devoted to the project. Stay tuned for developments.

- - I'm working on a system whereby we can update our membership list info directly from the FCC Amateur Radio database. Beta testing seems to be going well so far. However we still need you to notify us whenever you change info (Street Address, Town, State, ZIP, and

especially your email address as that is not included in the FCC database yet). If you don't notify us, you may stop receiving the email newsletter, and we may not be able to send you any certificates or prizes you have earned. It's very important for any organization to maintain an accurate database of its members and that can only be done through the members themselves notifying the organization of changes in their info.

- Ever since we started our sprints we have struggled with ideas to help our west coast USA members to be able to participate more regularly. Because the USA is spread out over 4 time zones, it is difficult. If we make the sprint times more convenient for west coast members, then the times are too late for the east coast members, and so on. We feel that the time frame we have now is the best we can do as a compromise to members in all 4 time zones and we won't change that.

We tried a couple of ideas in the past that were dismal failures. We had a 4 hour sprint time frame with participants operating a 2 hour frame of their choice. Only a few participants made any QSO's outside the first 2 hours. We also asked if the west coast members would like an extra sprint if someone from there would volunteer to do all the work involved in running it. No one stepped forward to offer.

Now we are going to give another idea a try. We will award a certificate to the winner in each time zone in our SWA category. That way it will be like 4 mini sprints within our sprint. In effect, EST members will only compete against other EST members, PST members only against other PST members, etc. Just as in 'local' sports rivalries, e.g. Browns-Steelers, Yankees-RedSox, or in-state rivalries among hams in the big ham radio contests, this will allow participants in each time zone to set up 'rivalries' among themselves for top score in their particular time zone. Hopefully this will increase PST/MST participation enough to allow even those members who don't care about scores to have more of a chance to make QSO's with their fellow members.

The GAIN category will remain the same with one nationwide winner since so far, only a very tiny percentage of participants enter in that category.

If we have giveaways in conjunction with the sprints, we'll have a drawing among the 4 (5 if we have GAIN category entrants) winners to see who wins the prize.

There will no longer be any 2nd place certificates issued. We have yet to decide about our Top Non-Winner and Special Award certificates.

This whole idea will be implemented for either the May or June sprint.

Just another innovative idea from the 'Club With A Difference', the NAQCC.

- Since no one is interested in operating our club call N3AQC similarly to what FISTS is doing with KN0WCW, we are dropping that idea, and you won't hear about it again.

5. MEMBER NEWS: I still continue to get many personal emails from members telling me of their QRP exploits, or asking me a question about this or that aspect of QRP/CW operation. I can't figure out why instead of writing me, you don't make the info into a news item and send it to Paul for the newsletter. I know there are a lot more folks who enjoy reading about your exploits, and who may be able to answer your questions besides me. Not that I don't enjoy doing it, but this section is a much better forum for that info than only my email inbox. So send a brief description of your accomplishments and/or your questions to our news editor Paul

KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET** so he can convert it into a news item like those here.

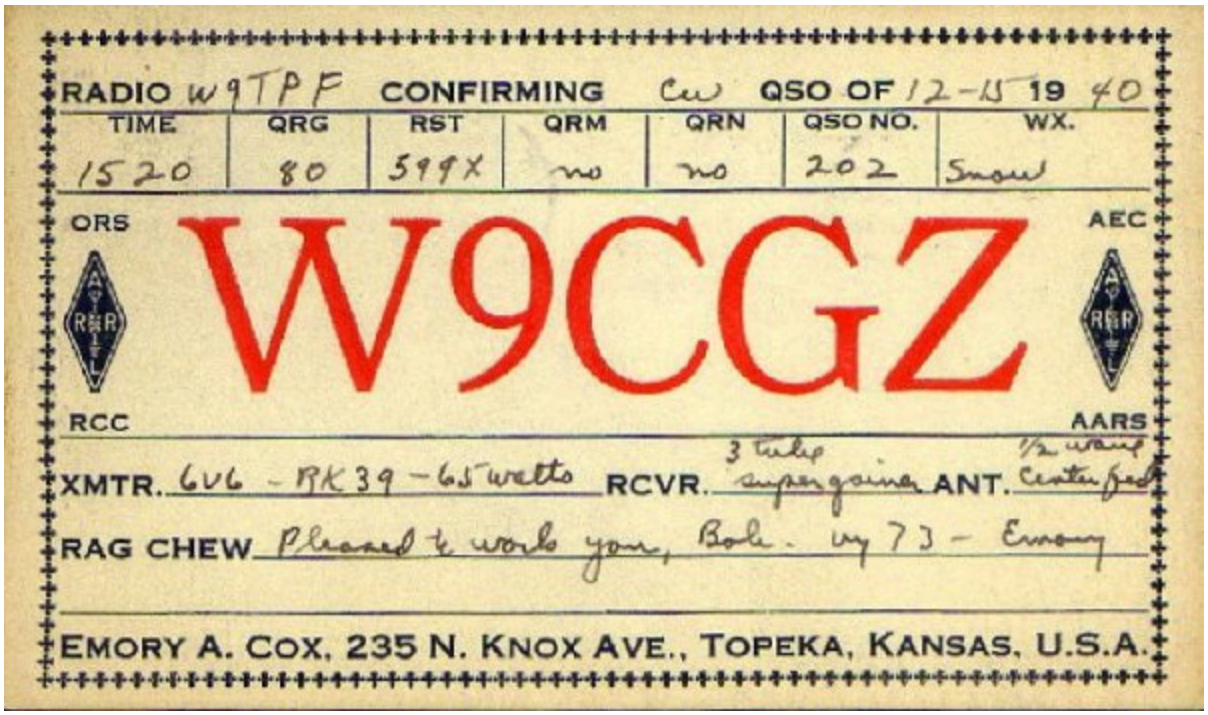
- **From Wolf DI1CC/G4MR #2067 -** Mark your calendars! From May 2 to June 17 I will be working QRP with my English call G4MR. One week I will be GM4MR/P. The WAB-square in England is SJ29 near Liverpool. The antennas are Keleman-dipole and longwire. QSL for all QSOs is okay direct or via DARC bureau to DL1CC or via FISTS-bureau (Please do not send QSL via RSGB-bureau). 73 & 72 de Wolf

- **From Joseph KF6VVQ #2288 -** I was first licensed around ten years ago but have been away from ham radio for a few years. Now I am finally in the process of learning CW. The reason I wanted my license was to use CW. When first licensed, I was studying Electrical Engineering. I tried to devote time to learning CW but guess I just gave up. However, now I am extremely serious and have been devoting time daily for practicing CW.

I am using a program written by G4FON which utilizes the Koch method. To be honest, I get rather bored with just talking to folks. It has never been a huge deal to me to talk to people using voice. My heart and my desire has always been with CW which is why I am devoting much time to learning it and getting on the air. I am currently a Technician license holder but I'm going to take the exam for General very soon. In the meantime I am studying for the exam as well as building a Ten Tec Model 1340 QRP CW Tranceiver. I wanted to thank you for allowing me to join this wonderful club and look forward to what the future holds for me and CW.

- **From Randy KB4QQJ #1809 -** My little QRP Party to Lake Mackintosh in Burlington, NC went well. It was short notice for some but I still made 13 NAQCC contacts, all 2xQRP. I also had five SKCC QSOs, two were 2xQRP. The rest of the 2xQRP contacts were FISTS/QRP-L folks answering my "cq qrp de kb4qqj/p" looking for numbers, chats, counties and grids. hi hi! I had six DX contacts. The most unique was Oleg, UU9JX/MM somewhere off the coast of Scotland. I finished with a total of 103 contacts and 31 were 2xQRP. I'll let you know where I'm going for my April QRP Party.

- **From Paul N8XMS #675 -** My QRP QSOs have been significantly reduced recently by a different kind of ham radio activity. I have been researching, through the internet and other sources, the ham radio life of Emory Cox, ex-W9CGZ, W5KNN, W0CGZ, and W0MA. He was both my Elmer and my grandfather. First licensed in 1939, he passed away in 1992. Unfortunately all of his logs and records were lost. Recently I found a real treasure on a web site dedicated to antique QSL cards that is maintained by W8JYZ Antique QSL Website. It's a QSL card for a contact that he made in December 1940. Here is a scan of the card:



RADIO W9TPF CONFIRMING CW QSO OF 12-15 19 40

TIME	QRG	RST	QRM	QRN	QSO NO.	WX.
1520	80	599X	no	no	202	Snow

ORS AEC

W9CGZ

RCC AARS

XMTR. 6V6 - RK 39 - 65 watts RCVR. 3 tube superregen ANT. ½ wave Center fed

RAG CHEW Pleased to work you, Bob. 73 - Emory

EMORY A. COX, 235 N. KNOX AVE., TOPEKA, KANSAS, U.S.A.

- **From Joe W4ONC #2102 -** I just had a brain drain or is that storm? Anyway I have an interesting tidbit. I sometimes question things that I hear or see. I always wondered, Why at times would you see contrails from jets and then at other times there were none. It all has to do with moisture in the higher altitudes. Can this be a way of predicting precipitation? Another item is, Do penguins have knees?

But I have come across a nifty little question related to our hobby. How do you send capital letters in CW? It could either be just a fun thing to think about or maybe someone could come up with a punch line for the question. I think that it is rather funny and it would be fun to ask another ham the question and then walk away while he stands there with a big question mark on his face.

- **From Steve NU7T #434 -** My home is in Nevada, U.S.A. I use a horizontal 40m loop at 6 meters high. It is just above the roof of my house. The radio is an Orion with 5 watts output. My key is a GHD bug and Bencher RJ-2. This past month I have worked, Guam, Costa Rica, Ducie, Eastern Kiribati, South Cook, Nauru and Clipperton. This is fun !

- **From Rich K8UV #2053 -** Our ARC club, WD8IEL in Chelsea, Michigan has run field day for years and I have always been the only CW op in the bunch. More handi-talkies here than HF rigs. But dispite the lack of CW ops, we have always turned in our score to the ARRL and have not done too bad. Of course most of the contacts are HF SSB. Each year I work from midnight to end of day Sunday. In the past I have run 100 watts and used a bug or straight key. I can get my MDL-100 bug down to about 10 words per minute and last year scored 141 Q's with it and only occasionally used the straight key to straighten out a couple of question marks in regards to the contact. This year I plan on using my Ten-Tec Century 21 at 5 watts or less on 80 meters. I hope to beat last years score and have fun with using the bug again too. See you on the air in June, QRP field day.

- **From Bill K6MGO #259 -** I thought you'd get a kick out of this email I received from a guy on a Navy ship out to sea. I was working QRP, with an indoor antenna strung through my house. Still trying to make contact with Herb, but, haven't so far.

----- Original Message -----

From: Herb Russell
To: k6mgo@verizon.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2008 11:41 AM
Subject: 40 Meter CW

Hi, William,
Just thought you'd like to know I copied your station sending cq around 1105 PDT this morning while shortly after we left Point Loma. We were sailing around 30 or 40 miles off shore. I work as a radio operator on board USNS Yukon. You were on 7.040 mhz. and the signal was weak but quite readable. Were you using QRP? I'd have called you on the ships radio equipment as I can always tune it up on the ham bands but I was on watch at the time and we were busy. Anyhow, just thought you'd be interested. Have fun and all the best. 73's
Herb Russell
WA0YFB/MM (NAQCC#561)
USNS Yukon T-AO 202

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - I wonder if anyone else loved their homebrew key from our November sprint enough to keep using it as their primary key from then on. That's the case with me. Since I built the key in late October, I've used it for well over 90% of my QSO's. The only exceptions being DXing and contesting (except for our NAQCC sprints, of course). It kind of brings back the thrill I had in the early days of my ham life in making QSO's with something I designed and built myself - something I hadn't experienced recently with my TS-570 rig. The 570 is a joy to operate and much easier than my old homebrew rigs used to be, but still deep down there is a difference in feeling in making QSO's with it vs. the homebrew stuff.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.